



Cambridge Assessment International Education
Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (9–1)

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

0992/12

Paper 1 Poetry and Prose

May/June 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Answer **two** questions: **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

All questions in this paper carry equal marks.



This document consists of **24** printed pages, **4** blank pages and **1** Insert.

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SECTION A: POETRY

Answer **one** question from this section.

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 1: from Part 5

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 1 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

For Heidi With Blue Hair

When you dyed your hair blue
 (or, at least, ultramarine
 for the clipped sides, with a crest
 of jet-black spikes on top)
 you were sent home from school 5

because, as the headmistress put it,
 although dyed hair was not
 specifically forbidden, yours
 was, apart from anything else,
 not done in the school colours. 10

Tears in the kitchen, telephone-calls
 to school from your freedom-loving father:
 ‘She’s not a punk in her behaviour;
 it’s just a style.’ (You wiped your eyes,
 also not in a school colour.) 15

‘She discussed it with me first –
 we checked the rules.’ ‘And anyway, Dad,
 it cost twenty-five dollars.
 Tell them it won’t wash out –
 not even if I wanted to try.’ 20

It would have been unfair to mention
 your mother’s death, but that
 shimmered behind the arguments.
 The school had nothing else against you;
 the teachers twittered and gave in. 25

Next day your black friend had hers done
 in grey, white and flaxen yellow –
 the school colours precisely:
 an act of solidarity, a witty
 tease. The battle was already won. 30

(Fleur Adcock)

How does Adcock make this poem so moving?

Or 2 How does Browning create a vivid atmosphere in *Meeting at Night*?

Meeting at Night

The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

5

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!

10

(*Robert Browning*)

SONGS OF OURSELVES VOLUME 2: from Part 2

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 3 Read this poem, and then answer the question that follows it:

London Snow

When men were all asleep the snow came flying,
 In large white flakes falling on the city brown,
 Stealthily and perpetually settling and loosely lying,
 Hushing the latest traffic of the drowsy town;
 Deadenng, muffling, stifling its murmurs failing; 5
 Lazily and incessantly floating down and down:
 Silently sifting and veiling road, roof and railing;
 Hiding difference, making unevenness even,
 Into angles and crevices softly drifting and sailing. 10
 All night it fell, and when full inches seven
 It lay in the depth of its uncompacted lightness,
 The clouds blew off from a high and frosty heaven;
 And all woke earlier for the unaccustomed brightness
 Of the winter dawning, the strange unheavenly glare:
 The eye marvelled—marvelled at the dazzling whiteness; 15
 The ear hearkened to the stillness of the solemn air;
 No sound of wheel rumbling nor of foot falling,
 And the busy morning cries came thin and spare.
 Then boys I heard, as they went to school, calling, 20
 They gathered up the crystal manna to freeze
 Their tongues with tasting, their hands with snowballing;
 Or rioted in a drift, plunging up to the knees;
 Or peering up from under the white-mossed wonder,
 ‘O look at the trees!’ they cried, ‘O look at the trees!’
 With lessened load a few carts creak and blunder, 25
 Following along the white deserted way,
 A country company long dispersed asunder:
 When now already the sun, in pale display
 Standing by Paul’s high dome, spread forth below
 His sparkling beams, and awoke the stir of the day. 30
 For now doors open, and war is waged with the snow;
 And trains of sombre men, past tale of number,
 Tread long brown paths, as toward their toil they go:
 But even for them awhile no cares encumber 35
 Their minds diverted; the daily word is unspoken,
 The daily thoughts of labour and sorrow slumber
 At the sight of the beauty that greets them, for the charm they have broken.

(Robert Bridges)

How does Bridges vividly convey the effects of the snowfall in this poem?

- Or 4 Explore the ways in which Millay makes *The Buck in the Snow* such a sad poem.

The Buck in the Snow

White sky, over the hemlocks bowed with snow,
Saw you not at the beginning of evening the antlered buck and his doe
Standing in the apple-orchard? I saw them. I saw them suddenly go,
Tails up, with long leaps lovely and slow,
Over the stone-wall into the wood of hemlocks bowed with snow.

5

Now he lies here, his wild blood scalding the snow.

How strange a thing is death, bringing to his knees, bringing to his antlers
The buck in the snow.

How strange a thing--a mile away by now, it may be,
Under the heavy hemlocks that as the moments pass
Shift their loads a little, letting fall a feather of snow--
Life, looking out attentive from the eyes of the doe.

10

(*Edna St Vincent Millay*)

- Or 6 In what ways does Clarke make the visit to Port Talbot so dramatic in *Heron at Port Talbot*?

Heron at Port Talbot

Snow falls on the cooling towers
delicately settling on cranes.
Machinery's old bones whiten; death
settles with its rusts, its erosions.

Warning of winds off the sea 5
the motorway dips to the dock's edge.
My hands tighten on the wheel against
the white steel of the wind.

Then we almost touch, both braking flight, 10
bank on the air and feel that shocking
intimacy of near-collision,
animal tracks that cross in snow.

I see his living eye, his change of mind, 15
feel pressure as we bank, the force
of his beauty. We might have died
in some terrible conjunction.

The steel town's sulphurs billow 20
like dirty washing. The sky stains
with steely inks and fires, chemical
rustings, salt-grains, sand under snow.

And the bird comes, a surveyor
calculating space between old workings
and the mountain hinterland, archangel
come to re-open the heron-roads,

meets me at an inter-section 25
where wind comes flashing off water
interrupting the warp of the snow
and the broken rhythms of blood.

SECTION B: PROSE

Answer **one** question from this section.

JANE AUSTEN: *Mansfield Park*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 7 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

‘You are not serious, Tom, in meaning to act?’ said Edmund in a low voice, as his brother approached the fire.

‘Not serious! never more so, I assure you. What is there to surprise you in it?’

‘I think it would be very wrong. In a *general* light, private theatricals are open to some objections, but as *we* are circumstanced, I must think it would be highly injudicious, and more than injudicious, to attempt any thing of the kind. It would show great want of feeling on my father’s account, absent as he is, and in some degree of constant danger; and it would be imprudent, I think, with regard to Maria, whose situation is a very delicate one, considering every thing, extremely delicate.’ 5

‘You take up a thing so seriously! as if we were going to act three times a week till my father’s return, and invite all the country. But it is not to be a display of that sort. We mean nothing but a little amusement among ourselves, just to vary the scene, and exercise our powers in something new. We want no audience, no publicity. We may be trusted, I think, in chusing some play most perfectly unexceptionable, and I can conceive no greater harm or danger to any of us in conversing in the elegant written language of some respectable author than in chattering in words of our own. I have no fears, and no scruples. And as to my father’s being absent, it is so far from an objection that I consider it rather as a motive; for the expectation of his return must be a very anxious period to my mother, and if we can be the means of amusing that anxiety, and keeping up her spirits for the next few weeks, I shall think our time very well spent, and so I am sure will he.—It is a *very* anxious period for her.’ 10

As he said this, each looked towards their mother. Lady Bertram, sunk back in one corner of the sofa, the picture of health, wealth, ease, and tranquillity, was just falling into a gentle doze, while Fanny was getting through the few difficulties of her work for her. 15

Edmund smiled and shook his head. 30

‘By Jove! this wont do’—cried Tom, throwing himself into a chair with a hearty laugh. ‘To be sure, my dear Mother, your anxiety—I was unlucky there.’

‘What is the matter?’ asked her Ladyship in the heavy tone of one half roused—‘I was not asleep.’ 35

‘Oh! dear, no Ma’am—Nobody suspected you—Well Edmund,’ he continued, returning to the former subject, posture, and voice, as soon as Lady Bertram began to nod again—‘But *this* I *will* maintain—that we shall be doing no harm.’

‘I cannot agree with you—I am convinced that my Father would totally disapprove it.’ 40

‘And I am convinced to the contrary.—Nobody is fonder of the exercise of talent in young people or promotes it more than my father, and for any thing of the Acting, Spouting, Reciting kind, I think he has always a decided

taste. I am sure he encouraged it in us as boys. How many a time have we mourned over the dead body of Julius Caesar, and *to be'd* and *not to be'd*, in this very room, for his amusement. And I am sure, *my name was Norval*, every evening of my life through one Christmas holidays.' 45

'It was a very different thing.—You must see the difference yourself. My Father wished us, as school-boys, to speak well, but he would never wish his grown up daughters to be acting plays. His sense of decorum is strict.' 50

'I know all that,' said Tom displeas'd. 'I know my Father as well as you do, and I'll take care that his daughters do nothing to distress him. Manage your own concerns, Edmund, and I'll take care of the rest of the family.'

[from Chapter 13]

How does Austen strikingly convey the conflict between Tom and Edmund at this moment in the novel?

Or **8** What does Austen's portrayal of Mrs Norris encourage you to feel about her?

WILLA CATHER: *My Ántonia*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 9 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

All those fall afternoons were the same, but I never got used to them. As far as we could see, the miles of copper-red grass were drenched in sunlight that was stronger and fiercer than at any other time of the day. The blond cornfields were red gold, the haystacks turned rosy and threw long shadows. The whole prairie was like the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed. That hour always had the exultation of victory, of triumphant ending, like a hero's death — heroes who died young and gloriously. It was a sudden transfiguration, a lifting-up of day. 5

How many an afternoon Ántonia and I have trailed along the prairie under that magnificence! And always two long black shadows flitted before us or followed after, dark spots on the ruddy grass. 10

We had been silent a long time, and the edge of the sun sank nearer and nearer the prairie floor, when we saw a figure moving on the edge of the upland, a gun over his shoulder. He was walking slowly, dragging his feet along as if he had no purpose. We broke into a run to overtake him. 15

'My papa sick all the time,' Tony panted as we flew. 'He not look good, Jim.'

As we neared Mr Shimerda she shouted, and he lifted his head and peered about. Tony ran up to him, caught his hand and pressed it against her cheek. She was the only one of his family who could rouse the old man from the torpor in which he seemed to live. He took the bag from his belt and showed us three rabbits he had shot, looked at Ántonia with a wintry flicker of a smile and began to tell her something. She turned to me. 20

'My *tatine* make me little hat with the skins, little hat for win-ter!' she exclaimed joyfully. 'Meat for eat, skin for hat' — she told off these benefits on her fingers. 25

Her father put his hand on her hair, but she caught his wrist and lifted it carefully away, talking to him rapidly. I heard the name of old Hata. He untied the handkerchief, separated her hair with his fingers, and stood looking down at the green insect. When it began to chirp faintly, he listened as if it were a beautiful sound. 30

I picked up the gun he had dropped; a queer piece from the old country, short and heavy, with a stag's head on the cock. When he saw me examining it, he turned to me with his far-away look that always made me feel as if I were down at the bottom of a well. He spoke kindly and gravely, and Ántonia translated: 35

'My *tatine* say when you are big boy, he give you his gun. Very fine, from Bohemie. It was belong to a great man, very rich, like what you not got here; many fields, many forests, many big house. My papa play for his wedding, and he give my papa fine gun, and my papa give you.' 40

I was glad that this project was one of futurity. There never were such people as the Shimerdas for wanting to give away everything they had. Even the mother was always offering me things, though I knew she expected substantial presents in return. We stood there in friendly silence, while the feeble minstrel sheltered in Ántonia's hair went on with its scratchy chirp. The old man's smile, as he listened, was so full of sadness, of pity for things, that I never afterward forgot it. As the sun sank there 45

came a sudden coolness and the strong smell of earth and drying grass. Ántonia and her father went off hand in hand, and I buttoned up my jacket and raced my shadow home.

50

[from Book 1 Chapter 6]

How does Cather make this such a dramatic and unsettling moment in the novel?

Or **10** How far does Cather persuade you that Ántonia has a happy and satisfying life?

ANITA DESAI: *In Custody*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 11 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Deven had been more a poet than a professor when he married Sarla – he had only been taken on as a temporary lecturer and still had confidence in his verse – and for the wife of a poet she seemed too prosaic. Of course she had not been his choice but that of his mother and aunts, crafty and cautious women; she was the daughter of a friend of an aunt's, she lived on the same street as that family, they had observed her for years and found her suitable in every way: plain, penny-pinching and congenitally pessimistic. What they had not suspected was that Sarla, as a girl and as a new bride, had aspirations, too; they had not understood because within the grim boundaries of their own penurious lives they had never entertained anything so abstract. Sarla's home had been scarcely less grim but on the edges of it there flowered such promises of Eden as could be held out by advertisements, cinema shows and the gossip of girl friends. So she had dared to aspire towards a telephone, a refrigerator, even a car. Did not the smiling lady on the signboard lean seductively upon her crowded refrigerator, promising 'Yours, in easy instalments'? And the saucy girl in the magazine step into a car as though there were no such things in her life as bills, instalments or debts? Her girl friends had a joke about it – 'Fan, 'phone, frigidaire!' they would shout whenever anyone mentioned a wedding, a bridegroom, a betrothal, and dissolve in hectic laughter. While her mother collected stainless steel cooking pots and her sisters embroidered pillowcases and anti-macassars for her, she dreamt the magazine dream of marriage: herself, stepping out of a car with a plastic shopping bag full of groceries and filling them into the gleaming refrigerator, then rushing to the telephone placed on a lace doily upon a three-legged table and excitedly ringing up her friends to invite them to see a picture show with her and her husband who was beaming at her from behind a flowered curtain. 5
10
15
20
25

But by marrying into the academic profession and moving to a small town outside the capital, none of these dreams had materialized, and she was naturally embittered. The thwarting of her aspirations had cut two dark furrows from the corners of her nostrils to the corners of her mouth, as deep and permanent as surgical scars. The droop of her thin, straight hair on either side of her head repeated these twin lines of disappointment. They made her look forbidding, and perhaps that was why her husband looked so perpetually forbidden, even if he understood their cause. He understood because, like her, he had been defeated too; like her, he was a victim. Although each understood the secret truth about the other, it did not bring about any closeness of spirit, any comradeship, because they also sensed that two victims ought to avoid each other, not yoke together their joint disappointments. A victim does not look to help from another victim; he looks for a redeemer. At least Deven had his poetry; she had nothing, and so there was an added accusation and bitterness in her look. 30
35
40

Usually he was enraged by her tacit accusations that added to the load on his back. To relieve it, he would hurl away dishes that had not been cooked to his liking, bawl uncontrollably if meals were not ready when he wanted them or the laundry not done or a button missing or their small son noisy or unwashed; it was to lay the blame upon her, remove its clinging 45

skin from him. Tearing up a shirt she had not washed, or turning the boy out of the room because he was crying, he was really protesting against her disappointment; he was out to wreck it, take his revenge upon her for harbouring it. Why should it blight his existence that had once shown promise and had a future? 50

But now the blight settled on his own existence and he submitted to it; it suited his mood, it seemed fitting. Sprawled upon the broken cane chair in the veranda, he listened to Sarla moving about the house inside, and watched his son playing on the steps. They were busy, he idle. They were alive, he in a limbo. If he made no effort to rise from it, there he would remain. 55

[from Chapter 4]

How does Desai memorably reveal Deven's thoughts and feelings about his marriage at this moment in the novel?

Or **12** Does Desai's writing make it possible for you to have any admiration for Murad?

CHARLES DICKENS: *Hard Times*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 13 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

‘Are you in pain, dear mother?’

‘I think there’s a pain somewhere in the room,’ said Mrs Gradgrind, ‘but I couldn’t positively say that I have got it.’

After this strange speech, she lay silent for some time. Louisa holding her hand, could feel no pulse; but kissing it, could see a slight thin thread of life in fluttering motion. 5

‘You very seldom see your sister,’ said Mrs Gradgrind. ‘She grows like you. I wish you would look at her. Sissy, bring her here.’

She was brought, and stood with her hand in her sister’s. Louisa had observed her with her arm round Sissy’s neck, and she felt the difference of this approach. 10

‘Do you see the likeness, Louisa?’

‘Yes, mother. I should think her like me. But’ –

‘Eh? Yes, I always say so,’ Mrs Gradgrind cried, with unexpected quickness. ‘And that reminds me. I – I want to speak to you, my dear. Sissy, my good girl, leave us alone a minute.’ 15

Louisa had relinquished the hand: had thought that her sister’s was a better and brighter face than hers had ever been: had seen in it, not without a rising feeling of resentment, even in that place and at that time, something of the gentleness of the other face in the room: the sweet face with the trusting eyes, made paler than watching and sympathy made it, by the rich dark hair. 20

Left alone with her mother, Louisa saw her lying with an awful lull upon her face, like one who was floating away upon some great water, all resistance over, content to be carried down the stream. She put the shadow of a hand to her lips again, and recalled her. 25

‘You were going to speak to me, mother.’

‘Eh? Yes, to be sure, my dear. You know your father is almost always away now, and therefore I must write to him about it.’

‘About what, mother? Don’t be troubled. About what?’ 30

‘You must remember, my dear, that whenever I have said anything, on any subject, I have never heard the last of it; and consequently, that I have long left off saying anything.’

‘I can hear you, mother.’ But, it was only by dint of bending down to her ear, and at the same time attentively watching the lips as they moved, that she could link such faint and broken sounds into any chain of connexion. 35

‘You learnt a great deal, Louisa, and so did your brother. Ologies of all kinds, from morning to night. If there is any Ology left, of any description, that has not been worn to rags in this house, all I can say is, I hope I shall never hear its name.’ 40

‘I can hear you, mother, when you have strength to go on.’ This, to keep her from floating away.

‘But there is something – not an Ology at all – that your father has missed, or forgotten, Louisa. I don’t know what it is. I have often sat with Sissy near me, and thought about it. I shall never get its name now. But your father may. It makes me restless. I want to write to him, to find out for God’s sake, what it is. Give me a pen, give me a pen.’ 45

Even the power of restlessness was gone, except from the poor head, which could just turn from side to side. 50

She fancied, however, that her request had been complied with, and that the pen she could not have held was in her hand. It matters little what figures of wonderful no-meaning she began to trace upon her wrappers. The hand soon stopped in the midst of them; the light that had always been feeble and dim behind the weak transparency, went out; and even Mrs Gradgrind, emerged from the shadow in which man walketh and disquieteth himself in vain, took upon her the dread solemnity of the sages and patriarchs. 55

[from Book 2 Chapter 9]

How does Dickens make this such a moving moment in the novel?

- Or** **14** In what ways does Dickens make the marriage between Louisa and Bounderby so disturbing?

KATE GRENVILLE: *The Secret River*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 15 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

They had their meal early that night. There was a feeling of needing to be ready.

Thornhill did not ask himself, ready for what?

It was only just dusk when Sal got the children into bed and sang to them. *When I grow rich, say the bells of Shoreditch. When will that be, say the bells of Stepney. I do not know, says the great bell at Bow.* Her voice sounded parched. He heard in it a quaver of tenderness.

5

Or perhaps of fear.

The two of them sat up late over the last of the fire, watching in silence as the draughts flickered over the coals. In their corner the children snuffled and sighed. Dick flung himself over and called out something in a blurred voice. From the lean-to Ned was snoring with a noise like a shuddering saw. They heard him cough, could imagine Dan turning him over, and in the silence that fell they could hear the sounds coming from the camp.

10

At first it was a sharp clapping, insistent as a heartbeat. Sal turned her face to Thornhill's. In the firelight her eyes were pools of shadow but he saw how her mouth was tight. Before he could think of reassurance, the singing started: a high strong wailing of a man's voice, and other voices in a kind of drone underneath. It was not a tune, nothing cheerful that you might listen to like Oranges and Lemons, more a kind of chant as you might hear in a church. It was a sound that worked its way under the skin.

15

Thornhill tried to speak up loud. *Having a bit of a sing-song*, he said, but his mouth had gone dry. He tried again: *Like that Scabby Bill. Remember Scabby Bill?* Of course she remembered him. But she knew, as well as he did, that this authoritative chorus of noise was very different from the thin song that Scabby Bill had managed in return for a mouthful of liquor.

25

He had to force himself not to whisper. *They'll get sick of it by and by.*

Out there, between the cracks in the walls, the night was as black as the inside of an ear. The huge air stirred, full of hostile life. He imagined it: the blacks creeping up to the hut, silent as lizards on their wide quiet feet. They might at this very moment be peering in at them. The noises were getting louder, the sort of sound it would take an army to make.

30

The words not said were like a creature pacing up and down between them.

35

Now Ned and Dan, woken out of their sleep, came in. Ned went over to the lamp and stood beside it as if the glow would keep him safe. *They coming to get us, Mr Thornhill*, he said.

Hear them laughing, Dan added. *They can't hardly wait.*

It was true, they could hear distant laughter. Thornhill felt fear cold on his skin at the picture in his mind of them preparing their spears with a butcher's glee, how sharp they were, how quick they would kill a white man.

40

Ned's voice was on the edge of panic. *They coming to spear us in the guts, ain't they*, and Bub's voice came quavery, *Don't let them spear me Da!* He could hear Johnny catch the fear and set up a snivelling that set Mary off too. Sal went over to where they lay and wrapped her arms around them.

45

If they'd a wanted to spear us they'd a done it ten times over by now, Thornhill said. Then he thought that might not be the best argument to follow. *We got no call to worry,* he announced, but no one seemed convinced. 50

Now Willie was speaking up. *They get away with it, we'll never see the end of it, Da,* he said. *We best show them good and proper.* To Thornhill's ears, the words had a secondhand feel about them, borrowed from someone else. Smasher perhaps, or Sagitty Birtles. 55

He saw the boy anew: a mulish skinny lad who had outgrown his strength, all bony neck and bat-ears and a mouth that was trying to be strong. Willie stood squinting at him, scratching the back of one leg with a long bare foot. *Get the gun, Da, why'n't you get the gun?* 60

But Dick had got up from the stool and faced up to his brother. *Ain't no call for the gun, Willie,* he said. *They just having a get-together, like Da says.* Willie grabbed his shoulder and shook it. *Bulldust,* he cried. *Bloody bulldust that is, we got to get the bloody gun.*

[from Part 5]

In what ways does Grenville vividly convey the Thornhills' fear at this moment in the novel?

- Or 16 How does Grenville strikingly convey the growing conflict between Will and Sal at Thornhill's Point?

JOHN KNOWLES: *A Separate Peace*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 17 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Gradually the noise in the room, which had revived when the three of them came in, subsided again.

Brinker managed it. He never raised his voice, but instead he let the noise surrounding it gradually sink so that his voice emerged in the ensuing silence without any emphasis on his part—‘so that you were standing next to the river bank, watching Phineas climb the tree?’ he was saying, and had waited, I knew, until this silence to say.

5

‘Sure. Right there by the trunk of the tree. I was looking up. It was almost sunset, and I remember the way the sun was shining in my eyes.’

‘So you couldn’t ...’ I began before I could stop myself.

10

There was a short pause during which every ear and no eyes were directed toward me, and then Brinker went on. ‘And what did you see? Could you see anything with the sun in your eyes?’

‘Oh sure,’ said Leper in his new, confident, false voice. ‘I just shaded my eyes a little, like this,’ he demonstrated how a hand shades the eyes, ‘and then I could see. I could see both of them clearly enough because the sun was blazing all around them,’ a certain singsong sincerity was developing in his voice, as though he were trying to hold the interest of young children, ‘and the rays of the sun were shooting past them, millions of rays shooting past them like—like golden machine-gun fire.’ He paused to let us consider the profoundly revealing exactness of this phrase. ‘That’s what it was like, if you want to know. The two of them looked as black as—as black as death standing up there with this fire burning all around them.’

15

Everyone could hear, couldn’t they? the derangement in his voice. Everyone must be able to see how false his confidence was. Any fool could see that. But whatever I said would be a self-indictment; others would have to fight for me.

20

‘Up there where?’ said Brinker brusquely. ‘Where were the two of them standing up there?’

‘On the limb!’ Leper’s annoyed, this-is-obvious tone would discount what he said in their minds; they would know that he had never been like this before, that he had changed and was not responsible.

30

‘Who was where on the limb? Was one of them ahead of the other?’

‘Well of course.’

‘Who was ahead?’

35

Leper smiled waggishly. ‘I couldn’t see *that*. There were just two shapes, and with that fire shooting past them they looked as black as—’

‘You’ve already told us that. You couldn’t see who was ahead?’

‘No, naturally I couldn’t.’

‘But you could see how they were standing. Where were they exactly?’

40

‘One of them was next to the trunk, holding the trunk of the tree. I’ll never forget that because the tree was a huge black shape too, and his hand touching the black trunk anchored him, if you see what I mean, to something solid in all the bright fire they were standing in up there. And the other one was a little farther out on the limb.’

45

‘Then what happened?’

‘Then they both moved.’

‘How did they move?’

‘They moved,’ now Leper was smiling, a charming and slightly arch smile, like a child who knows he is going to say something clever, ‘they moved like an engine.’ 50

In the baffled silence I began to uncoil slowly.

‘Like an engine!’ Brinker’s expression was a struggle between surprise and disgust.

‘I can’t think of the name of the engine. But it has two pistons. What is that engine? Well anyway, in this engine first one piston sinks, and then the next one sinks. The one holding on to the trunk sank for a second, up and down like a piston, and then the other one sank and fell.’ 55

Someone on the platform exclaimed, ‘The one who moved first shook the other one’s balance!’ 60

‘I suppose so.’ Leper seemed to be rapidly losing interest.

[from Chapter 11]

How does Knowles make this such a dramatic moment in the novel?

Or 18 Does Knowles convince you that Gene is entirely honest in his feelings towards Finny?

ALAN PATON: *Cry, the Beloved Country*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

Either 19 Read this extract, and then answer the question that follows it:

Outside the pleasant-faced man came and spoke to them and hearing their plans, invited them to his house, where he and his wife had a number of boys in their charge, boys who had left the big reformatory building and were living outside in these free houses. He gave them some tea and food, and he too told them that Absalom had become a head-boy, and had behaved well during his stay at the reformatory. So they talked about the reformatory, and the children that were growing up in Johannesburg without home or school or custom, and about the broken tribe and the sickness of the land, until a messenger came from the young man to say that he was ready. 5

It was not long before the motor-car had reached Pimville, which is a village of half-tanks used as houses, set up many years before in emergency, and used ever since. For there have never been houses enough for all the people who came to Johannesburg. At the gate they asked permission to enter, for a white man may not go into these places without permission. 10

They stopped at one of these half-tank houses, and the young white man took them in, where they were greeted by a young girl, who herself seemed no more than a child. 15

– We have come to inquire after Absalom, said the young white man. This umfundisi is his father. 20

– He went on Saturday to Springs, she said, and he has not yet returned.

The young man was silent awhile, and he frowned in perplexity or anger.

– But this is Tuesday, he said. Have you heard nothing from him? 25

– Nothing, she said.

– When will he return? he asked.

– I do not know, she said.

– Will he ever return? he asked, indifferently, carelessly.

– I do not know, she said. She said it tonelessly, hopelessly, as one who is used to waiting, to desertion. She said it as one who expects nothing from her seventy years upon the earth. No rebellion will come out of her, no demands, no fierceness. Nothing will come out of her at all, save the children of men who will use her, leave her, forget her. And so slight was her body, and so few her years, that Kumalo for all his suffering was moved to compassion. 30

– What will you do? he said.

– I do not know, she said.

– Perhaps you will find another man, said Msimangu bitterly. And before Kumalo could speak, to steal away the bitterness and hide it from her – I do not know, she said. 35

And again before Kumalo could speak, Msimangu turned his back on the girl, and spoke to him privately.

– You can do nothing here, he said. Let us go.

– My friend ... 40

– I tell you, you can do nothing. Have you not troubles enough of your own? I tell you there are thousands such in Johannesburg. And were your back as broad as heaven, and your purse full of gold, and did your 45

compassion reach from here to hell itself, there is nothing you can do.

Silently they withdrew. All of them were silent, the young white man heavy with failure, the old man with grief, Msimangu still bitter with his words. Kumalo stood at the car though the others were already seated.

50

– You do not understand, he said. The child will be my grandchild.

– Even that you do not know, said Msimangu angrily. His bitterness mastered him again. And if he were, he said, how many such more have you? Shall we search them out, day after day, hour after hour? Will it ever end?

55

Kumalo stood in the dust like one who has been struck. Then without speaking any more he took his seat in the car.

[from Book 1 Chapter 10]

How does Paton make this moment in the novel so dramatic?

Or **20** In what ways does Paton's writing create a vivid picture of Ndotsheni?

from *Stories of Ourselves*

Remember to support your ideas with details from the writing.

- Either 21 Read this extract from *The Lemon Orchard* (by Alex La Guma), and then answer the question that follows it:

‘Are you cold, hotnot?’ the man with the light jeered.

The coloured man did not reply. He was afraid, but his fear was mixed with a stubbornness which forbade him to answer them.

‘He is not cold,’ the fifth man in the party said. ‘He is shivering with fear. Is it not so, hotnot?’

5

The coloured man said nothing, but stared ahead of himself into the half-light made by the small lantern. He could see the silhouette of the man who carried the light, but he did not want to look at the two who flanked him, the one who had complained of the cold, and the one who had spoken of his fear. They each carried a sjambok and every now and then one of them slapped a corduroy leg with his.

10

‘He is dumb also,’ the one who had spoken last chuckled.

‘No, Andries. Wait a minute,’ the leader who carried the shotgun said, and they all stopped between the row of trees. The man with the lantern turned and put the light on the rest of the party.

15

‘What is it?’ he asked.

‘Wag’n oomblikkie. Wait a moment,’ the leader said, speaking with forced casualness. ‘He is not dumb. He is a slim hotnot; one of those educated bushmen. Listen, hotnot,’ he addressed the coloured man, speaking angrily now. ‘When a baas speaks to you, you answer him. Do you hear?’ The coloured man’s wrists were tied behind him with a riem and the leader brought the muzzle of the shotgun down, pressing it hard into the small of the man’s back above where the wrists met. ‘Do you hear, hotnot? Answer me or I will shoot a hole through your spine.’

20

The bound man felt the hard round metal of the gun muzzle through the loose raincoat and clenched his teeth. He was cold and tried to prevent himself from shivering in case it should be mistaken for cowardice. He heard the small metallic noise as the man with the gun thumbed back the hammer of the shotgun. In spite of the cold little drops of sweat began to form on his upper lip under the overnight stubble.

25

30

‘For God’s sake, don’t shoot him,’ the man with the light said, laughing a little nervously. ‘We don’t want to be involved in any murder.’

‘What are you saying, man?’ the leader asked. Now with the beam of the battery-lamp on his face the shadows in it were washed away to reveal the mass of tiny wrinkled and deep creases which covered the red-clay complexion of his face like the myriad lines which indicate rivers, streams, roads and railways on a map. They wound around the ridges of his chin and climbed the sharp range of his nose and the peaks of his chin and cheekbones, and his eyes were hard and blue like two frozen lakes.

35

40

‘This is mos a slim hotnot,’ he said again. ‘A teacher in a school for which we pay. He lives off our sweat, and he had the audacity to be cheeky and uncivilised towards a minister of our church and no hotnot will be cheeky to a white man while I live.’

‘Ja, man,’ the lantern-bearer agreed. ‘But we are going to deal with him. There is no necessity to shoot him. We don’t want that kind of trouble.’

45

‘I will shoot whatever hotnot or kaffir I desire, and see me get into trouble over it. I demand respect from these donders. Let them answer when they’re spoken to.’

50

He jabbed the muzzle suddenly into the coloured man’s back so that he stumbled struggling to keep his balance. ‘Do you hear, jong? Did I not speak to you?’ The man who had jeered about the prisoner’s fear stepped up then, and hit him in the face, striking him on a cheekbone with the clenched fist which still held the sjambok. He was angry over the delay and wanted the man to submit so that they could proceed. ‘Listen you hotnot bastard,’ he said loudly. ‘Why don’t you answer?’

55

The man stumbled, caught himself and stood in the rambling shadow of one of the lemon trees. The lantern-light swung on him and he looked away from the centre of the beam. He was afraid the leader would shoot him in anger and he had no wish to die. He straightened up and looked away from them.

60

‘Well?’ demanded the man who had struck him.

‘Yes, baas,’ the bound man said, speaking with a mixture of dignity and contempt which was missed by those who surrounded him.

65

How does La Guma’s writing make this such a powerful part of the story?

- Or** **22** In what ways does MacLaverty powerfully convey tensions in the relationship between the boy and his Aunt Mary in *Secrets*?

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